

From the Editor

THE cover of this month's *Soldiers* features SGT Benjamin Finklestein from the 82nd Airborne's 3rd Bn., 325th Inf. Regt., during the annual Best Ranger Competition. SPC Douglas DeMaio was on hand for this year's contest and shows us what it's like to participate in the grueling contest that makes the Iron Man competition look like child's play.

If you like the action and adventure of the rangers, but not the hardship and exertion, then the Army game is for you. Heike Hasenauer profiles "America's Army," what many consider the most realistic military computer game ever created. Available this month, "America's Army" features authentic weapons, equipment, uniforms and units in settings modeled after real-world Army training areas.

From Africa, USAREUR's Art McQueen reports on the Germany-based 720th Ordnance Company's dangerous mission of mercy. "A Hot and Deadly Mission" shows these explosives experts in action after a Nigerian ammunition dump exploded, killing more than 1,000 people.

Next month is the anniversary of one of the most heinous acts ever committed against the United States — the terrorist attack on America. To mark the event, *Soldiers* will publish a special issue that will be a pictorial chronology of events since Sept. 11.

John C. Suttle

Casualty Affairs

FIRST, I want to thank you for the excellent June issue!

Everyone who has seen the article on casualty and memorial affairs here has been truly impressed with the content and quality.

Those of us in the casualty business do work which is often not recognized, except by those whose lives we touch. We are unique in that we are the only people who do this day in and day out for our soldiers and their families. Your piece is a touching tribute to those of us in the business.

Again, thank you for a well written, illustrated and timely article.

*SGM Chris Weinreich
via e-mail*

More on "Beret Blues"

I AM responding to the "Beret Blues" letter in the June Feedback section.

I think that the writer — who said that Reservists should have to wait for their berets until after active-duty soldiers get their second berets — is wrong. Reservists are soldiers, and should not have to wait to get their berets just because they mainly serve one weekend a month and two weeks in the summer.

Some Reservists and Army National Guard soldiers are on full-time active duty now — and berets should be available to them.

No soldier should have to wait to be issued any type of required gear, regardless of

what type of mission, unit or duty he or she is on. After all, we all work on the same team. The last time I checked, it didn't say "National Guard" on my uniform, it said "Army."

*SGT Kathy Sanders
via e-mail*

I ENJOY reading soldiers' viewpoints on various topics, and the letter about the issue of berets for Reservists really got my attention.

I am an AGR soldier in the Tennessee Army Guard and it bothers me that this soldier has decided that just because he is active duty he should come before Reserve and National Guard troops.

Yes, most of our soldiers only wear the berets one weekend a month and two weeks during the summer, but does that make us any less important to the nation?

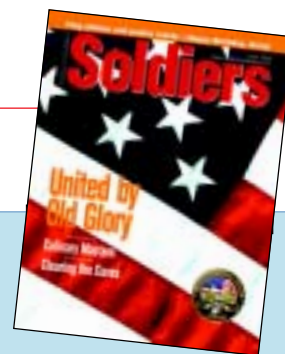
Just a reminder to the individual who made that comment: It was National Guard soldiers that arrived on site at the World Trade Center within hours of the Sept. 11th attack, and it is National Guard members and Reservists guarding our airports and federal buildings.

We are all part of the same team and have just as much right to be wearing our berets along with our active-duty counterparts!

*SGT Daniel L. Schafer
via e-mail*

DOES the author of the June letter really expect us to believe that he doesn't think of Reservists as second-class soldiers? The fact that he suggests one way for a Reservist to obtain a beret is to join an active-duty unit leads me to believe otherwise.

Are we not all part of the



June Kudos

I COMMEND Steve Harding on a job well done for his June article on the High Altitude Aviation Training Site in Eagle, Colo. As webmaster for the Colorado National Guard Web site, I appreciate your allowing us to provide a link to a PDF version of "Learning to Master the Mountains."

*SFC Dave Schmidt
via e-mail*

I WANT to congratulate you on your June issue.

In the past I have argued that the quality of Army publications were below standard. My focus of angst was always layout and graphics (my apologies, but I included *Soldiers* with that).

Your current issue though has been a welcome change. Its graphics are crisp, and the layout is bright and vibrant. I especially liked the added images to highlight the articles (an excellent example is page 4-5 "Culinary Masters").

Another well thought out aspect is that each article and section has a separate theme and style. This really helps in assisting article flow.

Nice work all around.

*Jack Gaines
via e-mail*

same Army? Even though we have different missions, do we all not have the same objective? Don't Reserve and National Guard soldiers have to meet the same uniform

requirements as active-duty soldiers?

As for wearing the uniform daily, I am an AGR soldier, and do just that. And I wear my beret, my first, every day.

It's no wonder this soldier asked that his name be withheld.

*SGT Ronald A. Overstreet
via e-mail*

AS an AGR operations NCO in a reserve unit I must respond to the "Beret Blues" letter. The writer seems to think Reservists only don a uniform one weekend a month and two weeks a year.

The Reservists in my company are authorized one annual training period (AT) per year and are required to perform 48 multiple unit training assemblies (MUTAs); these are the bare minimum. A majority perform far more duty days than the minimum. Their

need for a beret is at least as great as the need of their active-duty counterparts.

*SFC Curtis Bussiere
via e-mail*

THE person who wrote that reserve-component soldiers don't need berets since they only wear them one weekend per month needs to research just how many activated National Guard members and Reservists are wearing them. Then he needs to research just how many more reserve-component soldiers will be activated in the very near future.

The anonymous letter writer should have done the research before making such a stupid statement. If I'd made such a statement I'd have requested that my name be withheld, too.

*Bill A. Basabilbaso
Fort Eustis, Va.*

Hot Topics Documents

YOUR recent Hot Topics on force protection mentioned the CJCS 5260 checklist. Where can I find it?

*SFC Jim Stowe
via e-mail*

The information on where and how to obtain the checklist can be found by visiting Army Knowledge Online and using the Mega Search Channel, which is found on the "home" tab on AKO's main page.

Flag Waving

YOUR June article "Star Spangled Manners" was excellent, but there is one more

place that the flag is flown 24/7 (and without illumination).

Do you know where? On the moon.

*SFC James B. Pierson
via e-mail*

SPEAKING of our June flag article, several readers pointed out that the picture of the flag in use at the time Missouri joined the Union had 25 stars, when it should have had 24.

Here is that 24-star flag for all who asked about it:



Soldiers is for soldiers and DA civilians. We invite readers' views. Stay under 150 words — a post card will do — and include your name, rank and address. We'll withhold your name if you desire and may condense your views because of space. We can't publish or answer every one, but we'll use representative views. Write to: **Feedback, Soldiers, 9325 Gunston Road, Ste. S108, Fort Belvoir, VA 22060-5581**, or e-mail: soldiers@belvoir.army.mil.



Order Processing Code:

*** 5905**

☐ YES, please send _____ subscriptions to: **Soldiers**

The total cost of my order is \$ _____.

Name or title (Please type or print)

Company name Room, floor, suite

Street address

City State Zip code+4

Daytime phone including area code

Purchase order number (optional)



Credit card orders are welcome!

Fax your orders (202) 512-2250

Phone your orders (202) 512-1800

(SOL) at \$38 each (\$53.20 foreign) per year.

Price includes regular shipping & handling and is subject to change.

Check method of payment:

☐ Check payable to: Superintendent of Documents

☐ GPO Deposit Account ☐

☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover

☐

(expiration date)

☐

Authorizing signature

Date

Mail to: Superintendent of Documents, PO Box 371954, Pittsburgh PA 15250-7954

Important: Please include this completed order form with your remittance.

Thank you for your order!

